

Washington, D.C. - Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-08) released the following statement in response to President Bush's State of the Union address:

"I was encouraged to hear the President tonight echo the bipartisan spirit that he demonstrated while working with Congress on the economic stimulus package, and which I've seen personally in working with Treasury Secretary Paulson. I'm particularly gratified that the small business provisions that I earlier introduced were included in the stimulus deal.

"I'm also encouraged to see the President express that environmental issues are a priority. However, I'd like to see his actions better reflect that. For instance, he still fought to protect \$14 billion in oil subsidies when that money could have been better applied to the development of renewable energy resources.

"On Iraq, while we're all encouraged by the recent military progress, the political progress that was promised has yet to be seen. Ultimately, that political reconciliation is up to the Iraqi people and not us.

"Overall, I'm hopeful that the President will use his final year in office to be as productive as possible on a bipartisan basis, and I'm ready to work with him toward that end."

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